

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 606

INFO AMCONGEN DHAHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SA

SUBJECT: VISITORS TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. THE INCREASING NUMBER OF PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL VISITORS TO SAUDI ARABIA IS STRAINING THE LIMITED RESOURCES OF THE EMBASSY. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES, HOTEL SHORTAGES, AND OTHER FACTORS IN SAUDI ARABIA TASK EVEN THE MOST SOPHISTICATED WORLD TRAVELER. CAREFUL PRE-PLANNING OF TRAVEL IN THIS AREA OFTEN COMES TO NAUGHT WHEN AIRLINES AND HOTELS DO NOT HONOR CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS. THESE CONDITIONS MAKE THE EMBASSY A NATURAL REFUGE FOR AMERICAN VISITORS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES.

2. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN, AND WHATEVER ASSISTANCE POSSIBLE WITHIN ITS LIMITED RESOURCES TO OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE TRAVELERS, THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO INFORM EMBASSIES IN WESTERN EUROPE, THE ARAB MIDDLE EAST, AND IRAN THAT:

(A) THE EMBASSY IS NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO MEET PERSONS AND ASSIST WITH CUSTOMS FORMALITIES AT THE AIRPORT UNLESS PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS, WHICH THE EMBASSY WILL HAVE CONFIRMED TO THE TRAVELER, HAVE BEEN MADE. NORMALLY, THE EMBASSY WILL MEET AND PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION ONLY FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS WITH RANK OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OR EQUIVALENT AND HIGHER, CODELS, VIPS, AND PARTIES OF COMPARATIVE

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STANDING.

(B) PERSONS OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED ABOVE MAY OBTAIN TAXIS AT THE AIRPORT AND PROCEED TO THEIR HOTEL. TAXIS SHOULD ALSO BE USED FROM HOTEL TO OTHER LOCATIONS IN CITY, INCLUDING EMBASSY.

(C) SIMILAR PROCEDURES APPLY TO PERSONS LEAVING JIDDA.

(D) THE EMBASSY WILL NO LONGER MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS UNLESS A DEPOSIT ACCOMPANIES THE REQUEST. IF THE REQUEST IS MADE TELEGRAPHICALLY IT MUST ALSO STATE THE TRAVELER WILL REIMBURSE THE EMBASSY FOR THE COST OF ANY HOTEL ROOM CANCELLATION CAUSED BY HIS LATE ARRIVAL. THIS IS NECESSARY SINCE THE EMBASSY IS BILLED FOR ROOMS IT RESERVES BUT NOT OCCUPIED WITHIN SIX HOURS OF EXPECTED ARRIVAL OF THE TRAVELER AT THE HOTEL. REQUESTS FOR RESERVATIONS SHOULD REACH THE EMBASSY AT LEAST THREE WEEKS IN ADVANCE. OTHERWISE, HOTELS ARE LIKELY TO BE FULL.

3. POSTS SHOULD BE INFORMED AGAIN (JIDDA 77247 OF DECEMBER 9, 1974) THAT THE IMPORTATION OF ALCOHOL, SLEEPING PILLS, PEP PILLS OF ALL TYPES, HASHISH AND OTHER DRUGS IS STRENUOUSLY PROHIBITED. THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT INSTANCES OF PERSONS ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT WITH A BOTTLE OF OPENED OR UNOPENED LIQUOR WHICH HAVE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE EMBASSAMENT TO THE POST AND TO THE INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED. PERSONS FOUND WITH LIQUOR IN THEIR LUGGAGE MAY FACE IMPRISONMENT OR IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM THE KINGDOM ON FIRST AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT.

4. IN THE CASE OF HASHISH AND HARDER DRUGS, THE PENALTY IS AN UNALTERABLE 15 YEAR SENTENCE FOR TRAFFICKING, 5 YEARS FOR POSSESSION, AND 2 YEARS FOR USE.  
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